



## Foreign Language Association of Chairpersons and Supervisors

[www.flacs.org](http://www.flacs.org)

Carmen Campos, President, Cold Spring Harbor UFSD  
John Placella, Immediate Past President, Port Washington UFSD  
Lillian Carey, Vice-President Suffolk County, Hauppauge Public Schools  
Peter Giacalone, Vice President Nassau County, Garden City Public Schools  
Lissa Bailly, Treasurer, Great Neck Public Schools  
Francesco L. Fratto, Public Relations Officer, Half Hollow Hills Central School District  
David Balsamo, Secretary, Great Neck (South) Public Schools

September 01, 2011

Dear Commissioner King:

On behalf of the Board of Directors and members of the Foreign Language Association of Chairpersons and Supervisors (FLACS), I sincerely thank you for meeting with us on August 16, 2011 to discuss the impact of the elimination of the LOTE Proficiency and Regents exams on foreign language programs throughout the State of New York. We applaud your support that all current graduation requirements for students regarding foreign language study remain in place. Considering the state's position as a global epicenter of culture, finance and commerce, reducing LOTE requirements would have been devastating for students and their ability to compete in the global workforce. Despite the elimination of the exams, we look forward to our continued dialogue with NYSED on how to make foreign language instruction even stronger as we move forward. In fact, we would like to follow up on our discussion and raise the following issues and questions:

- We strongly encourage NYSED to consider making Foreign Language in the Elementary School (FLES) a requirement in all school districts; this will not only allow students to reach a higher level of proficiency, but studies have shown that learning to communicate in a foreign language leads to greater student achievement in other academic areas. FLES is especially important when considering the need for increased contact time/instruction for the less-commonly-taught languages, which tend to require double or triple the time to reach the same level of proficiency when compared to Latin based Romance languages.
- A change in NY State regulations is needed with regard to students who have historically challenged the LOTE Regents exams for credit. Due to the elimination of such exams, this important pathway to earn credit no longer exists.
- A revision of the NYS LOTE Curriculum is needed. Our learning standards were innovative at the time of their inception, but we now need to consider alignment with the ACTFL Standards and other European models, which measure and rate students' proficiency on a commonly developed scale.
- If NYSED is encouraging school districts to participate in the creation of locally developed assessments through consortiums, asking school districts to set aside time for these LOTE assessments on the state's Examination Schedule would greatly assist in this endeavor. FLACS respectfully suggests that Monday (AM or PM) of the first testing week is reserved for the Checkpoint A exams and another day for the Checkpoint B exams. We would also like to suggest

that the examination schedule indicates "For Locally Written LOTE Checkpoint A or B Assessments". This will make coordinating exams through consortia a much simpler process.

- A field memorandum and a new LOTE Q&A are needed to help clarify misunderstandings caused by the elimination of the LOTE Regents and SLP exams. In addition, schools need guidance on how these new locally developed assessments are treated with regard to graduation requirements and criteria for the different diplomas that are offered to students. There is confusion among school administrators, guidance counselors, parents, students and the community at large and any assistance is greatly appreciated to eliminate the confusion.
- The role of Kin Chee, LOTE Associate, has been invaluable. We ask that NYSED preserve the position of LOTE Associate. The LOTE administrators are forever indebted to Mr. Chee as he continues to assist members of our organization navigate through the NYS regulations.
- FLACS looks forward to working with NYSED to create a new generation of LOTE assessments, perhaps including an assessment at the Checkpoint C level (high school seniors) that could serve both as an exit exam from high school and as a possible placement exam for the post-secondary institutions that opt to use the assessment for placement and/or credit purposes.
- Again, we encourage the New York State Legislature and Governor to provide funding to the NYS Office of Assessment to return, in a new format, LOTE assessments; our organization will begin a campaign to encourage our elected officials to once again support LOTE programs and assessments in NYS.
- As suggested during our meeting, FLACS will explore private funding sources that would support the study of foreign languages.

Although the state is experiencing economic difficulties, the need for valid statewide LOTE assessments is indisputable. Without them, we fear a lessening of the state's strong and innovative foreign language programs that have taken decades to build.

Thank you for your continued support of LOTE. Learning a foreign language has always been a key part of a solid liberal arts education and New York State should be proud that it has always been on the forefront. Though NYSED is experiencing funding shortages, FLACS hopes that our continued dialogue and cooperation can lead to something positive: a new generation of students who will benefit from an even stronger foreign language program in New York State.

Respectfully,

Carmen Campos  
President of FLACS

cc: R. Tilles – Board of Regents  
D. Abrams – NYSED  
K. Slentz - NYSED  
K. Chee –NYSED  
J. Carlino - NYSAFLT